

**Amendments to the Specification**

*Please replace the paragraph at page 4, lines 24-29 through page 5, lines 1-6 with the following amended paragraph:*

Assignment checking prevent the creation of dangling references by forbidding assignments that could cause a field of an object to point to an object with a shorter lifetime. The RTSJ permits references to objects in heap or immortal memory to be stored in any class of memory. A scope memory object, therefore, can reference objects in the heap. The garbage collector typically ensures that objects in the heap survive at least as long as references to those objects. ~~An object in scoped memory can also scoped memory, however, are not always permitted and need to be checked.~~ Objects in a scope are freed when the scope is no longer active. If an object in heap or immortal memory were permitted to hold a reference to an object in a scoped memory location, that reference would become invalid once the scope is exited. Consequently, objects in heap or immortal memory cannot contain references to scope memory areas. Runtime checks of scoped memory references can be performed to enforce the rules.